

**Approved: March 7, 2013**

**Rockville Environment Commission  
Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, February 7, 2013  
Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue**

**Attendance**

**Commissioners Present:** John Becker, Steve Cardon, Julie Palakovich Carr, Kris Dighe (by phone), Alicia Hosmer, Devinie Lye, Clark Reed and Lea Rosenbohm

**Commissioners Absent:** Beri Kravitz

**Guests:** Mark Charles, Environmental Management  
Lise Soukup, Environmental Management

**Meeting Commencement**

The meeting convened at 7:31 pm by Chair Reed.

**Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Palakovich Carr moved and Commissioner Lye seconded approval of the January 3 meeting minutes with no corrections. The motion passed 6-0-1 [Commissioner Cardon did not arrive in time for this vote; and having missed the previous meeting, Commissioner Hosmer abstained].

**Discussion and Endorsement of the Final Rock Creek Watershed Assessment**

Lise Soukup, project manager for this assessment, returned to the Commission and provided an update of the Assessment's final report, including revisions since the Commission last reviewed the draft document. Ms. Soukup covered the assessment's findings and briefed the group on the recommendations: Rock Creek drains 30% of Rockville though there are only 6 miles of surface streams in the City. The watershed is 40% impervious and 65% of the drain system lacks any type of treatment prior to discharge. Further, the 35% that does get treated is marginal at best. Unfortunately, there are limited opportunities for additional structural controls other than green streets type improvements.

The final report is posted on the City's website and will be shared with the Mayor and Council on February 25, 2013. Staff requested the Commission's endorsement for the report. A motion to endorse was made by Commissioner Hosmer and seconded by Commissioner Palakovich Carr. The motion passed 8-0. Commissioner Cardon will attend the Mayor and Council meeting and speak in favor of the Assessment.

**Commission Website and Facebook Page**

Commissioner Lye led a discussion about the desirability of establishing a Commission website and Facebook pages that are separate from the City pages. Commissioner Lye also noted that the group should establish a "LinkedIn" page as well. She volunteered to maintain the pages. The group considered the pros and cons as well as conversations between Commissioner Lye and the City Communications staff. It was decided to seek a meeting of the Outreach Committee with

the Assistant City Manager (who oversees the Communications staff) and bring recommendations back to the Commission's March meeting.

### **FY 13 & FY14 Commission Goals and Objectives**

Each of the standing Committees briefed the rest of the group on their priority activities for the next year or so.

Sustainable Design and Energy – intends to pursue solar facilities on City properties; map existing solar residential homes; seek 100 new solar facilities on residential homes; sponsor an energy reduction and water conservation competition; advocate for an energy audit and disclosure by sellers at the time of a home purchase; promote urban agriculture by allowing chickens (hens only) and ducks under the zoning code; establish a tool lending library; and seek grants to help fund Commission initiatives.

Watershed Protection – intends to promote the *RainScapes* program to residents; enhance the *Adopt-a-Stream* and *Save Our Streams* (stream monitoring) programs; assist the City staff in scoping the Watts Branch Watershed Assessment; continue to organize and conduct stream clean ups twice each year; and raffle rain barrels at *Hometown Holidays*.

Outreach and Education – intends to sponsor a networking event for environmental professionals; pursue a greater social media presence for the Commission; to assist City staff in reaching a 60% recycling rate; and organizing the Commission's participate in *Hometown Holidays*, including showing a movie – either *Chasing Ice* or *Cape Spin*.

### **Environmental Management Staff Report**

- Mark Charles reported that March 23 is the annual *Earth Hour* celebration (8:00-9:00). A proclamation acknowledging this event will be taken up by the Mayor and Council on March 18. Commissioners are invited. Commissioner Palakovich Carr volunteered to draft the proclamation.
- Similarly, the Mayor and Council will receive a proclamation on April 1 regarding designating April as *Earth Month* and April 22, as *Earth Day*. Mr. Charles ran down a brief list of activities planned for the month.
- The deadline for getting *Hometown Holidays* information into the weekend program is March 15 (to Colleen McQuity of Recreation and Parks).
- Mark Charles reported that, for the next 12 weeks, he has an intern that can assist the Commission's recycling project.

### **New Business/Announcements**

- Commissioner Palakovich Carr announced that the Maryvale Creek stream clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, April 6 from 10:30 to 12:00. Meet at Maryvale Park.
- Commissioner Becker announced that the *Green Building Institute* and the NEAF have received a grant to host a workshop on greening residential homes. The Institute may be willing to sponsor a second workshop in Rockville.
- Commissioner Becker also noted that ATR has agreed to display their solar tracker to *Hometown Holidays* and they will also be bringing a vertical access, circular wind turbine.

- Commissioner Cardon moved that the Commission authorize the purchase of two rain barrels to be used at *Hometown Holidays*. There was no second. The motion may be reconsidered closer to the date for Hometown Holidays. Commissioner Rosenbohm volunteered to pursue a rain barrel donation in the interim.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 by unanimous consensus.

### **Next Commission Meeting**

The next Commission meeting is *tentatively* scheduled for **Thursday, March 7, 2013 at 7:30 pm** in the **Diamondback Conference Room** of the **Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue**, Rockville, Maryland, 20850. The public is invited to attend.